

June 1996

6761/3644 Classical Mythology

Time: two and a half hours

*In addition, candidates are allowed ten minutes,
before the examination begins, to read the paper.*

Answer **THREE** questions, **TWO** from Section A, and **ONE** from Section B.

Section A

1. Is it reasonable to interpret Zeus and Apollo as symbols of the forces of civilisation, opposed to the world of primitive nature?
2. To what extent do Greek myths of the early origins of the human race account for the existence of evil? To what extent do they suggest ways of coping with evil?
3. Discuss *mythopoesis* (the habit of reinterpreting myths to serve the needs of a changing society), illustrating your answer by reference to stories told about **either** Prometheus **or** Heracles.
4. Dionysus is a vegetation deity, and thus concerned with growth, death and rebirth. To what extent does this explain the stories that surround him?
5. "*The Lady of the Beasts, Artemis represents the power of instinct, of nature, and of unconscious drives*" (Harris & Platzner). Is this an adequate description of what Artemis stands for? "
6. To what extent should Roman foundation stories be interpreted as charter myths?
7. "*In order for a person to grow, death has to be confronted*". Does Greek and Roman ritual and myth about the underworld affirm this statement?

Section B

8. "*In all the varied myths in which classical myths have been passed on to us through the millennia, they have retained their power to compel our attention and to reveal to us, in myriad ways, their complex capacity for conveying meaning. They will undoubtedly continue to move us for a long time to come, expressing the continuity of the human spirit as well as its infinite variety in as yet unimagined ways.*" (Harris & Platzner). Comment.
 9. How do the Olympian deities represent the distinctive characteristics of Greek myth, including its emphases on anthropomorphism, individualism, competitiveness and ambivalence?
 10. To what extent and in what ways can a society's mythology throw light upon its beliefs, customs and preoccupations?
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